

NANCY J ENGBRETSON
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Senate Local Government Committee
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In February of 2011, my 88 year old Mother and Father were out shopping and doctoring. Before they went home, they decided to go to the China Buffet in the Holiday Village Shopping Center, in Missoula, Montana, for lunch .

Upon leaving the restaurant, my Mother decided that she had better go to the bathroom.

She said she entered the bathroom and there stood before her, a man. She said it was very obvious that it was not a woman that appeared as a man but that it was a man. She said that he just stood there and stared at her.

It scared out of her what she had gone in there for. She said that she was so scared that she could say nothing at all. She was too afraid to speak. She said that all she could think was, "NOT MY BATHROOM !".


After she thought about it she said that it was a good thing that she did not say anything as she would have been punished for it.

It is a shame that it is this way in the city of Missoula.

It is a most common thing for folks living in the country, who have to shop, bank, doctor, and eat out while in the cities and towns of our state, to have to use these facilities. It is common for folks with physical and medical problems, the most vulnerable of citizens, to have to use these facilities when they are out and about.

We women do not want to have to worry about the very thing that my elderly Mother encountered. We are fearful for our children, grandchildren, great grandchildren and even our elderly female family members, having to go through this sort of happening or even worse. We are fearful of what they might see or experience upon entering or while they are in a public restroom. Since this ordinance has been put in place, in Missoula, our very fears are beginning to come to fruition.

It is not right for a person to be placed in such a fearful position as my Mother was. This is not a matter of gender, this is a matter of right to feel free from fear. This incident and situation in Missoula shows the necessity of having a statewide standard on discrimination laws.



Nancy J. Engbretson
2977 Southside Road
Alberton, Montana 59820

Home: 406 - 722 - 3157
cell: 406 - 240 - 5602
email: daveandnancy@blackfoot.net